

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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R 202255Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3065
INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 11427

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PE
SUBJECT: RUMORS OF FOREIGN MINISTER DE LA PUENTE'S RESIGNATION

1. THE EMBASSY HAS HEARD RUMORS FROM FOREIGN MINISTRY AND OTHER SOURCES THAT FONMIN JOSE DE LA PUENTE HAS HANDED IN HIS RESIGNATION TO PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ BUT THAT THE RESIGNATION HAS NOT YET BEEN ACCEPTED. THE SPECIFIC REASON FOR THE ALLEGED RESIGNATION OFFER IS THE FIASCO OF MORALES BERMUDEZ' HERALDED BUT ULTIMATELY ABORTED STOPOVER IN QUITO, SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 13. IT IS KNOWN THAT DE LA PUENTE HAS ALSO COME UNDER SOME CRITICISM FOR THE GOP'S BOLIVIAN CORRIDOR PROPOSAL. SOME MILITARY OFFICERS CHARGE DE LA PUENTE WITH BEING TOO FORTHCOMING RATHER THAN RESPONDING TO CHILE WITH A SIMPLE "NO". OTHER CIVILIAN AND MILITARY GROUPS CRITICIZE HIM FOR THE ABRUPT ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE GOP PROPOSAL BEFORE THE THIRD ROUND OF ON-GOING PERU/CHILE DISCUSSIONS WAS COMPLETED. AND THE PROPOSAL ITSELF IS CONSIDERED BY SOME TO BE "TOO CLEVER" IN ITS SUGGESTED REINTRODUCTION OF PERUVIAN SOVEREIGNTY, BY WAY OF A TRIPARTITE CONDOMINIUM, INTO THE ARICA AREA. (EVEN IF FONMIN-INSPIRED, THE PROPOSAL AND ITS TIMING CERTAINLY HAD JUNTA AND CABINET APPROVAL).

2. PRESIDENTIAL AND GOP DISPLEASURE WITH THE QUITO FIASCO IS
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SAID TO BE DIRCTED AT FOREIGN MINISTRY HANDLING OF THAT PROJECTED VISIT MORE THAN AT ECUADOR'S ASSUMED NEED TO DISCUSS ITS AMAZONIAN ASPIRATIONS ONCE WORD OF THE VISIT LEAKED OUT. A FONOFF SOURCE TOLD EMBOFF THAT THE VISIT WAS NOT COORDINATED BY TOP FONOFF OFFICIALS BUT BY DE LA PUENTE'S OWN STAFF (DISPARAGINGLY TERMED COAP-PEPE). ONE OF THE RELATIVELY YOUNG FIRST

SECRETARIES WORKING FOR DE LA PUENTE IS SAID
TO HAVE LEAKED WORD
OF THE VISIT TO THE AGENCE FRANCE PRESS CORRESPONDENT IN LIMA,
THUS PRECIPITATING ECUADOR'S REACTION. SENIOR FONOFF OFFICIALS,
WHO HAVE BEEN MIFFED BY DE LA PUENTE'S RELIANCE ON THIS GROUP,
ALLEGEDLY DELIGHT AT HIS DISCOMFORT.

3. FINALLY, THERE IS TALK THAT THE NAVY WOULD LIKE TO TAKE ON
THE FOREIGN MINISTRY PORTFOLIO. NAVY MINISTER AND JUNTA MEMBER
ADMIRAL PARODI HAS BEEN DIPLOMATICALLY ACTIVE. HE RECENTLY
VISITED QUITO AND SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN WELL RECEIVED. PARODI IS
NOW ENGAGED IN AN ESSENTIALLY DIPLOMATIC TASK IN SANTIAGO AIMED
AT REDUCING SOMEWHAT HEIGHTENED TENSIONS ARISING OUT OF
THE BOLIVIAN CORRIDOR ISSUE.
DEAN

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